

photojournalism, and a masters degree in electronic journalism in May 1983. Shortly after graduation, he went into education where he taught at the Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent School District in Los Fresnos, Texas, from August 1999 to May 2000. He also was a teacher with Brownsville Independent School District in Brownsville, Texas, from August 1992 to June 1999. After leaving the education field, he joined the staff of the Brownsville Herald newspaper as copy editor in Brownsville, Texas. He was responsible for page design for daily pages, the Valley Business section and the cover of Valley/State section. Mr. Hall also has worked as a reporter, writer, and photographer for several weekly and daily publications in Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Ohio, and Indiana.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to honor Michael Hall, editor of the Laredo Morning Times Business Journal, in recognition of his selection as a recipient of the Distinguished Business Awards.

RECOGNIZING MR. KEITH KIRKLAND UPON RECEIVING THE 2006 INTERNATIONAL PAPER CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP AWARD

**HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 19, 2006*

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Keith Kirkland, the recipient of the 2006 International Paper Conservation Partnership Award.

This award is presented annually to an individual who has achieved significant results in the protection of habitat through a cooperative relationship with a business or company, and Mr. Kirkland, who serves as the Executive Director of The Wolf River Conservancy, is more than deserving.

For more than 20 years, first as a volunteer, and then as an employee of the Conservancy, Mr. Kirkland has championed conservation and has dedicated himself to protecting and enhancing the lands and waters along Tennessee's Wolf River.

Since 2003, when he was appointed Executive Director of the Conservancy, Mr. Kirkland has raised \$12.5 million to support the U.S. Corps of Engineers' Wolf River Restoration Project. This successful project has resulted in ensuring the protection of 17,000 acres and forest and wetlands within the Wolf River flood plain.

Furthermore, Mr. Kirkland has also helped to establish the Ghost River State Natural Area, whose protected landscapes serve as a recharge area for the region's aquifer. The establishment of this Natural Area has safeguarded drinking water for one of Tennessee's fastest-growing areas and habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Mr. Kirkland and thanking him for his efforts to protect the forests and rivers of Tennessee. I thank International Paper as well, for recognizing Mr. Kirkland with their award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. SPENCER BACHUS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 19, 2006*

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 16, I was absent from the House in order to attend the wedding of my eldest son and was forced to miss rollcall vote No. 288. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING ROXANNE I. VEDIA

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, June 19, 2006*

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Roxanne I. Vedia, Business Services Coordinator for the South Texas Workforce Development Board, on her being selected as a recipient of the "Women in Business Champion of the Year" award by the Laredo Development Foundation's Small Business Development Center, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Laredo Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Vedia, in her position as Business Services Coordinator for the South Texas Workforce Development Board, oversees the planning, promotion, and implementation of several initiatives that have helped small businesses to develop and prosper in South Texas. Prior to her work as Business Services Coordinator, Ms. Vedia served as a campus service manager for Communities In Schools, a program designed to help reduce the high school drop-out rate. She also previously taught secondary science education for the Laredo Independent School District.

Due to her extensive involvement in several business organizations such as Laredo Business & Professional Women, Financial Women International, and the Laredo Chamber of Commerce, she has established a philosophy of helping increase business opportunities for women through her present position. Ms. Vedia understands the importance of what it is to be a businesswoman, and it is for this reason she is selected to be a recipient of the "Women in Business Champion of the Year" award.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to honor Ms. Vedia, Business Services Coordinator for the South Texas Workforce Development Board in Laredo, Texas, in recognition of her selection as a recipient of the "Women in Business Champion of the Year" award.

DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

SPEECH OF

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 16, 2006*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, instead of finding, capturing, or killing the man who viciously attacked our country almost 5 years

ago, the administration misled our country and sent 150,000 troops to war with a country without any credible link to 9/11. Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us mentions Iraq 18 times, but it does not mention Osama bin Laden even once. Not only can we not find bin Laden in Afghanistan, but we can't find him in this resolution either.

If the other side of the aisle is serious about a resolution on the Global War on Terror, they would be better served to get their target correct.

Mr. Speaker, we all support the troops—our brave men and women who selflessly and bravely put themselves in harm's way. That point is not for debate. I carry the troops in my heart every day, and I hope that we work for their safe return home as soon as possible.

This is a time of great anxiety in America, especially for the families of our men and women in uniform, who, as we speak, are serving our country thousands of miles from home, in unfamiliar and often hostile lands. Today's debate should have been centered around a bipartisan resolution that would have allowed all of us to be on the record in support of our troops and against those who would seek to do harm to Americans at home and abroad.

Instead what the Republican Majority has brought before us today not only confuses the War in Iraq with the Global War on Terror, but it is also a transparent effort to divide this body by saying to those who want to start bringing the troops home that we do not support the national security interests of the United States. That is simply not true.

After the terrorist attacks against this country on September 11, 2001, we united behind the effort to remove the Taliban in Afghanistan. That country has made great strides by electing a government, establishing a constitution that grants equal rights to men and women, and opening schools for children who were denied an education by the Taliban. Our investment in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan was both the right thing to do and critical to our security.

Yet our job there is not finished. Much remains to be done to improve security. And most importantly, the hunt for Osama bin Laden continues.

Critical resources that should have been focused on this mission have instead been used in Iraq, a war that was a conclusion in search of a reason, a war of choice rather than of necessity.

Time and again, this Administration used false and misleading information to sell the war to Congress and the American people. The troops were sent into battle without basic equipment, like body armor, night vision goggles, and armored Humvees. We have been playing catch-up ever since to ensure that U.S. soldiers are adequately protected as they serve in Iraq. Just today, the Pentagon announced that 2,500 soldiers have been killed in Iraq. How high will this number go?

Crucially, we invaded Iraq without a plan to win the peace and without enough soldiers to secure a country nearly the size of Texas. In fact, rather than listen to Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki, who suggested that as many as 300,000 troops were required to properly secure postwar Iraq, the Administration ignored him and fired him.

This Administration has repeatedly underestimated the war's cost, which is being funded with emergency spending instead of